

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A probe block assembly for probing a device under test (DUT),
2 comprising:
a plurality of independent probe blocks each having a set of probes
4 and/or receptacles that mate to a respective mating set of DUT receptacles
and/or probes on said DUT;
6 a probe block frame which floatably holds said plurality of
independent probe blocks to allow each said independent probe block to
8 independently float within said probe block frame relative to a predetermined
position within said frame.

2. A probe block assembly in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
2 said plurality of independent probe blocks are positioned such that
each of said respective set of probes and/or receptacles of said respective
4 plurality of independent probe blocks are aligned parallel to a like axis of
probing.

3. A probe block assembly in accordance with claim 2, wherein said
2 plurality of independent probe blocks are positioned side-by-side within said
frame such that each of said respective set of probes and/or receptacles of
4 said respective plurality of independent probe blocks are aligned parallel to
one another and to said axis of probing.

4. A probe block assembly in accordance with claim 1, comprising:
2 an actuator attached to said probe block frame to controllably move
said frame to insert and/or remove said sets of probes and/or receptacles of
4 each of said plurality of independent probe blocks to and/or from said
respective mating set of DUT receptacles and/or probes on said DUT.

5. A probe block assembly in accordance with claim 1, wherein at
2 least one of said plurality of independent probe blocks comprises self-
centering capability that allows said independent probe block to align to said
4 respective mating set of DUT receptacles and/or probes on said DUT.

2 6. A probe block assembly in accordance with claim 5, wherein said
self-centering capability comprises at least one pair of coaxially aligned
springs positioned perpendicular to said axis of probing on opposite sides of
4 said independent probe block.

2 7. A method for probing a plurality of sets of receptacles and/or
probes of a device under test (DUT), said plurality of receptacles and/or
probes requiring probing parallel to a like probing axis, said method
4 comprising:

6 independently floating a probe block for each of said plurality of sets
of DUT receptacles and/or probes of said DUT within a single probe block
frame, each said independently floating probe block having a respective set
8 of probe block probes and/or receptacles that mate to a corresponding set of
said plurality of sets of receptacles and/or probes of said DUT;

10 aligning each said independently floating probe block within said
single probe block frame to its corresponding set of said plurality of sets of
12 receptacles and/or probes of said DUT; and

actuating said single probe block frame along said probing axis to
14 respectively engage each said respective set of probe block probes and/or
receptacles to its corresponding set of DUT receptacles and/or probes.

2 8. A method in accordance with claim 7, wherein:
said actuating step is performed with a single actuation motion.

2 9. A method for assembling a probe block assembly for probing a
device under test (DUT), said method comprising:

4 obtaining a plurality of independent probe blocks each having a set of
probes and/or receptacles that mate to a respective mating set of DUT
receptacles and/or probes on said DUT; and

6 independently floating said plurality of independent probe blocks
within a single probe block frame relative to a predetermined position within
8 said frame.

10. A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein said step for
2 independently floating said plurality of independent probe blocks within said
single probe block frame comprises:
4 positioning each said plurality of independent probe blocks relative to
said predetermined position with said single probe block frame such that
6 when said probe block frame is substantially aligned in a predetermined
position relative a device under test, each said respective set of probe block
8 probes and/or receptacles substantially aligns to its respective mating set of
DUT receptacles and/or probes on said DUT.